

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RANGOO 01407 241428Z

67

ACTION COA-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 SCI-06 EB-11 COME-00 NSF-04 FEA-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 AID-20

/132 W

----- 025878

R 240935Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8021

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 1407

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR EAID

SUBJ: BURMESE SEIZUER OF SEAFDC FISHERIES RESEARCH VESSEL

REF: (A) RANGOON A-053, MAY 15, 1974

(B) RANGOON A-058, MAY 17, 1974 (JOINT WEEKA ITEM 4)

SUMMARY: GUB SEIZED SEAFDC RESEARCH VESSEL, CHANGI, ON APRIL 7 FOR TRESPASSING IN BURMESE WATERS. US BUSINESSMEN WHO RECENTLY VISITED RANGOON BROUGHT WITH THEM DOCUMENTS OF EARLIER VOYAGE OF CHANGI WHICH SHOW VESSEL TOOK OBSERVATIONS WITHIN BURMESE 12 MILE TERRITORIAL LIMIT. BUSINESSMEN OBTAINED DOCUMENTS FROM RED OFFICE IN BANGKOK. IN EVENT THAT GUB MIGHT BE LED TO SUSPECT USG INVOLVEMENT, EMBASSY REQUESTS (A) INFORMATION ON CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF PREVIOUS USG SUPPORT FOR SEAFDC AND (B) THAT ALL DOCUMENTS IN USG POSSESSION RELATING TO EARLIER VOYAGES OF CHANGI IN BURMESE WATERS BE HANDLED CIRCUMSPECTIVELY. END SUMMARY.

1. REF AIRGRAMS PROVIDE BACKGROUND ON GUB SEIZUER OF SEAFDC RESEARCH VESSEL, CHANGI. CREWMEMBERS PRESENTLY BEING TRIED IN BURMESE COURT FOR TRESPASSING IN BURMA'S TERRITORIAL WATERS.

2. REPRESENTATIVES OF US FIRM, INTER-OCEANIC FACTORS INC., RECENTLY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 RANGOO 01407 241428Z

VISITED RANGOON TO PRESENT A PROPOSAL TO GUB FOR JOINT FISHERIES

VENTURE. AMONG THE DOCUMENTS THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM WAS A RECORD OF AN EARLIER VOYAGE (FEB 16 - MARCH 7) BY THE CHANGI. SEVERAL OF THE RECORDED CATCH LOCALITIES OF THAT VOYAGE LIE WITHIN THE BURMESE 12 MILE TERRITORIAL LIMIT. EMBOFFS WARNED THE BUSINESSMEN NOT TO SHOW THIS DOCUMENT TO GUB OFFICIALS. THE REPRESENTATIVES SAID THEY OBTAINED THE DOCUMENTS FROM THE USAID RED OFFICE IN BANGKOK.

3. AS FAR AS EMBASSY IS AWARE CHANGI ENGAGED IN PURELY SCIENTIFIC FISHERIES RESEARCH PROGRAM, BUT ACCORDING TO ITS OWN RECORDS, VESSEL HAD ENTERED BURMESE WATERS ON A PREVIOUS VOYAGE AND GUB ACCUSES IT OF TRESPASSING WHEN IT WAS SEIZED. AS REFAIRS NOTE, GUB SUSPICIOUS OF VESSEL'S MOTIVES IN VIEW OF HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT ABOARD.

4. EMBASSY CONCERNED THAT US NOT BE DRAWN INTO THIS CASE. ANY HINT OF US INVOLVEMENT, AS INNOCENT AND INDIRECT AS IT MAY BE, WOULD EMBARRASS US-BURMESE RELATIONS, CONCEIVABLY HARM US OIL FIRMS' CHANCES IN BIDDING FOR BURMESE OFF-SHORE OIL CONCESSIONS (REF B NOTES GUB'S SUSPICIONS CONCERNING JAPANESE IN THIS REGARD), AND JEOPARDIZE CHANCES FOR EARLY RELEASE OF CREW AND POSSIBLE RETURN OF VESSEL TO SEAFDC. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT USG ASSISTANCE TO SEAFDC ENDED IN 1972, BUT IN UNLIKELY EVENT US IS ACCUSED OF SPONSORING THIS VOYAGE, WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE GUB COMPLETE AND FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT REGARDING US SUPPORT FOR SEAFDC.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) PLEASE PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH BACKGROUND ON RED OR OTHER USAID SUPPORT FOR SEAFDC, DATE WHEN SUCH SUPPORT ENDED AND ANY INFORMATION ON ANY POSSIBLE WAY USG MIGHT BE CONNECTED WITH PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF RESEARCH VESSEL IN QUESTION. (B) PLEASE HANDLE ALL SEAFDC DOCUMENTS CONCERNING VOYAGES OF CHANGI IN BURMESE WATERS IN HIGHLY JUDICIOUS MANNER.
OSBORN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHERIES, RESEARCH, SHIP DETENTION, TERRITORIAL WATERS VIOLATIONS, TWELVE MILE LIMIT, CHANGI
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RANGOO01407
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740131-0145
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740519/aaaaaqtb.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION COA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) RANGOON A-053, MAY 15, 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BURMESE SEIZUER OF SEAFDC FISHERIES RESEARCH VESSEL
TAGS: PBOR, EAID
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005